



Traditional Leather Making

Katie Roe

The output is a collection of artefacts comprising handmade leather accessories which explore traditional techniques, made from Vegetable Tanned leather.

Research process

The focus of the research process was sourcing vegetable-tanned leathers and exploring traditional techniques and executing them to a high standard. Sourcing the leathers was mostly done online, contacting suppliers and tanneries directly and speaking to other leather-makers. By building up a library of vegetable-tanned leathers, Roe found suitable leathers for the artefacts. This included a matt grey leather which felt modern and relevant to the objects. Learning traditional techniques came from a combination of reading, connecting with leather-makers and observing the techniques to learn the process. A lot of experimenting took place to execute the techniques, such as the saddle stitching, well.

Research insights

Learning traditional leather-making techniques and working with vegetable tanned leather to create modern artefacts has allowed Roe to have a thorough understanding of how craftsmanship can be applied to contemporary, everyday fashion apparel. The process of hand-making resulted in extremely high quality, long lasting pieces. There is a market for this in the current fashion climate where fast fashion is having such a detrimental impact on the environment. The research also highlighted some of the challenges that crafters can face in modern society, such as: the time it takes to produce each item (for example the tote bag takes 18-19 hours to produce), the high costs of materials (vegetable tanned leather is 2.5-3 times more expensive than chrome dyed other leathers). Craftsmanship lends itself to small batch production, higher retail costs and a specific market.

Dissemination

The artefacts were disseminated via social media and an online portfolio on www.zealous.com.

TRADITIONAL LEATHER MAKING

Modern Artefacts – handmade from vegetable tanned leather





HAND STITCHED VEGETABLE TANNED LEATHER TOTE
CREATED USING TRADITIONAL LEATHER MAKING TECHNIQUES,
DESIGNED FOR THE MODERN DAY



HAND STITCHED VEGETABLE TANNED LEATHER SHOULDER BAG
CHANGEABLE STRAPS FOR MODERN EVERYDAY USE



HAND STITCHED VEGETABLE TANNED LEATHER GLASSES CASE
WITH HAND PAINTED BLACK EDGING AND GLOSS TOPCOAT



HAND STITCHED VEGETABLE TANNED LEATHER iPad CASE
CREATING MODERN ACCESSORIES USING TRADITIONAL CRAFTSMEN TECHNIQUES







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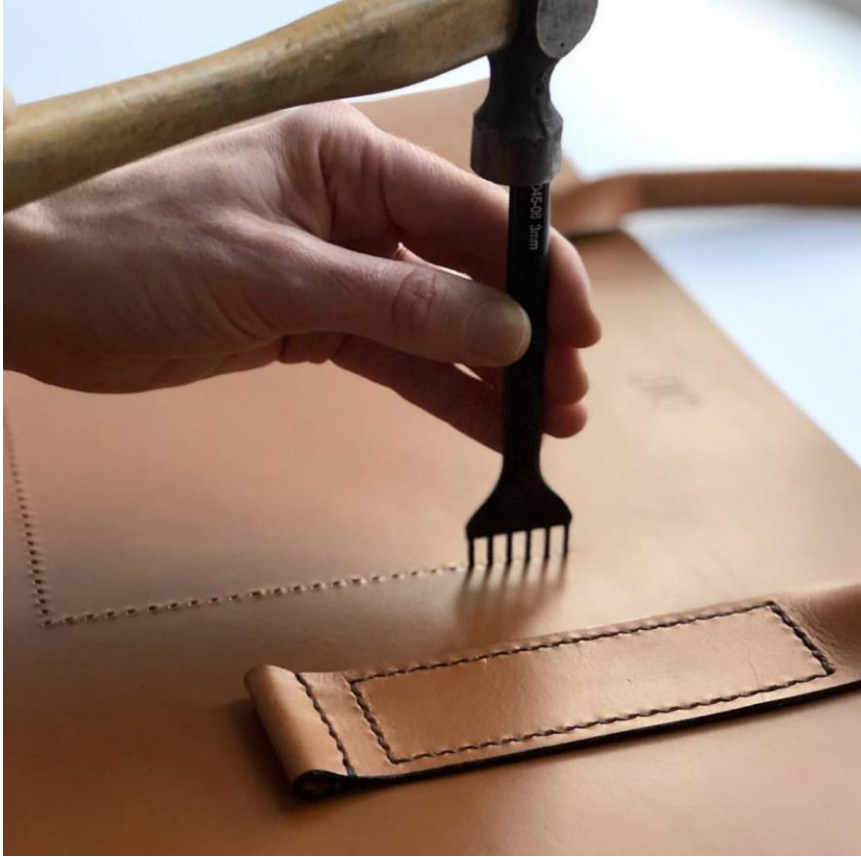
Supporting material



EDGES OF THE VEGETABLE TANNED LEATHER ARE
BEVELED USING A SPECIAL TOOL



EXAMPLE OF SOME OF THE TRADITIONAL TOOLS USED
IN LEATHERWORK



STITCHING HOLES PUNCHED BY HAND CREATING A
DIAMOND HOLE READY FOR SADDLE STITCHING THE
TOTE BAG



HAND SANDING PREPARES THE SURFACE FOR
GLUEING THE LINING. THE TOTE BAG IS MADE FROM
VEGETABLE TANNED LEATHER



ATTACHING MODERN ZIP FASTENINGS TO A
SHOULDER BAG USING HAND SADDLE STITCH



SHOULDER BAG DETAILS - MADE ENTIRLEY BY HAND
FROM VEGETABLE TANNED LEATHER



PUNCHING HOLES INTO A GLASSES CASE –
6 STITCHES PER INCH



HAND PUNCHING HOLES FOR METAL RIVITS



TRADITIONAL SADDLE STITCHING USED HERE TO
CREATE AN IPAD CASE



TRADITIONALLY EDGES WERE BURNISHED TO
SMOOTH AND FINISH THE EDGES – HERE I'M
APPLYING SPECIAL LEATHER EDGE PAINTS TO CREATE
A MODERN FINISH